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EDITOR:

D. W. BEADLE,

ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO.

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THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST.

Published by the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario.

Rev. R. BURNET, President, *London.* - - - D. W. BEADLE, Secretary, *St. Catharines.*

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SOME GERANIUMS OF RECENT INTRODUCTION.

Mademoiselle Amelia Baltet. When The Ghost was sent out it was so much better than Aline Sisley that it was received with great satisfaction, the blooms being more double, better formed, and of a purer white; but the hot suns of our summer days soon change the ivory white to a pink, and it is only in the early part of the season that it retains its ghostly character. A pure double white that will retain its whiteness under the blaze of our summer sun is still to be found, but we have in M'lle A. Baltet the nearest approach to this that has yet been brought to our notice. The flowers are more symmetrical than those of The Ghost, of a purer white, and become more slowly tinged with pink as they fade, and that less pronounced in depth of color. In the early part of the season it retains its snowy purity for a long time. The leaves are of a light green, distinctly but not broadly zoned; the trusses are of medium size, compact, and borne well above the foliage. It is the best double white we have seen.

Deputy Varroy fills the same niche among the doubles that Master Christine does among the singles, the color of the flowers being of the same inimitable shade of lovely pink. The leaves are broadly zoned, trusses of good size, and habit of plant excellent. It is a very beautiful and conspicuous flower.

J. C. Redbard does not seem to possess any particular excellence. It is a double scarlet, in no way better than many others, and not at all equal to some of the older sorts.

Emily Laxton is a very brilliant velvety scarlet; the flowers are very large, and the truss something enormous. The leaves are of a deep green, not zoned; the plant of good habit, and a free bloomer. We can commend this as one of the best of the double scarlets.

Henri Beurier is the best orange-salmon double we have seen; the flowers are well formed, and the shade is deep and rich. The leaves

are deep green with a broad dark zone, and the plant has a fine compact habit.

MADAME NEURY has much the same coloring as Purple Prince, and may be well said to be that variety with double flowers. This peculiar blending of bright and dark scarlet and red gives the flowers a very attractive appearance. The trusses are large, and well above the rich green foliage, which is not zoned.

NŒMIE has the same coloring as Mad Dutho Bretrand, which has been so much admired and songht after on account of its peculiar sha le of pink suffused with violet. The light-green leaves are faintly zoned. The plant is of good habit, producing its medium sized trusses in great profusion.

METEOR FLAG is very like Jewel, both in color and form of flower, and habit of growth; a little larger and more robust, and may on that account be preferred where size is an important consideration. To our taste the doubles of this style are the most beautiful, each flower being formed like a half opened rose in minature, and bearing the most minute inspection.

M. GELEIN LOWAGIE has certainly a most rich and glowing vermillion shade of scarlet, and ranks among the most dazzling of the doubles. Its trusses are large and conspicuous, borne well above the leaves, which are marked with a broad dark zone.

MRS. JOHN FREED was raised by a member of our Association, who named it after his estimable wife. It is one of the most useful doubles in cultivation for boquets and floral decorations, its clear bright scarlet giving a brilliant effect, while its usually medium sized trusses admit of its being readily introduced wherever the color is wanted. Each pip is mounted upon a footstalk of sufficient length to admit of its being taken out of the truss and used in the formation of button-hole boquets, where the flowers appear with good effect, and endure for a long time.

CHARLES GLYM will perhaps hardly rank among the doubles of recent introduction, but it is one of such peculiar and exceeding brilliancy and effectiveness that it deserves to be kept in remembrance. There is just a dash of orange shade through the scarlet, enough to give such vivacity to the coloring as to make it one of the most showy and attractive of all the geraniums. The trusses are of good size, borne up on stout stalks, and produced in great profusion. It is one of our favorites.

Turning now to the single flowered varieties, which—though having not the same persistence of bloom, and therefore not as desirable as the double for cut flowers and boquets—are better adapted for bedding out, and are more showy as pot plants; we will name a few that seem to possess some desirable quality or character that makes them worthy of attention.

Beauty of Kingsessing. We have been much pleased with this, for it is indeed a beauty. The petals are nearly white when newly open, shading towards the centre from light pink to salmon, the upper petals veined with salmon. As the blooms acquire age the white changes to a most delicate light-pink. The trusses are very large and produced in great profusion. The habit of the plant is good, the leaves slightly zoned, and when it is well grown and flowered it makes a most beautiful pot plant.

Triumphant is somewhat related to the foregoing in general appearance, though quite distinct. The three lower petals of each flower are white delicately tinged with blush, while the two upper petals are a light salmon beautifully feathered with rose. The trusses are large and numerous, borne well above the leaves, which are of a deep green with a broad black zone. It is of no value for bedding out, but makes a very showy and beautiful window plant.

Dazzler is worthy of its name. To say that it is an improvement on Jean Sisley or Sir Charles Napier would hardly be correct, for each of these holds a place of its own; and yet it is very like them both, but with a distinct rich velvety scarlet so set off by its clear white eye, and lit up with such a peculiar brilliancy that you say it is quite distinct from either. The flowers are of perfect form, borne in full round trusses, which are very abundant. We value it exceedingly.

Nellie Cooke is an exceedingly rich bright salmon flower of perfect form, contrasting beautifully with the deep-green broadly zoned leaves. The trusses are not large but very numerous, and when the plant is well flowered it presents a very attractive appearance.

Apple-blossom has been well named, for it is the very counterpart of some of our pink-and-white apple blossoms. The trusses are very large and finely formed, and the plant, when in full bloom, arrests the attention at once by its peculiar, delicately tinted flowers. This is sure to be a favorite variety with all geranium growers for

window decoration. The leaves are a deep green, with broad dark zone, which heighten the effect by their contrast.

LORD BELPER is usually described as a blood-red, but in reality it is a strange blending of Arthur Pearson and Ianthe, quite different from any other geranium, and well worthy of a place in a choice collection. The leaves are light-green, faintly zoned, the habit of the plant good, free-flowering and compact.

PALLAS does not seem to us to be any improvement on Master Christine, indeed we prefer the older sort.

CROMWELL, though good, is not equal to Sir Chas. Napier, which it closely resembles.

HAPPY THOUGHT is now well known to all of our readers, and continues to be admired for its novel leaf variegation, a creamy-white centre with green margin.

DISTINCTION has not become as popular as Happy Thought, though its very narrow black zone sets off the deep green of the leaves in very pretty style.

WINTER PROTECTION OF GRAPE VINES.

A member residing at Stratford writes to the HORTICULTURIST for our views on wintering grape vines in an elevated region like Stratford; whether laying them down, or leaving them exposed with some protection around the roots would be the better way.

To this we can only reply, that our experience leads us to prefer taking the vines down from the trellis and laying them upon the ground, and, if it be practicable, it is very advantageous to cover the vines with a few evergreen boughs. A variety of grape that will not pass the winter safely in this way had better be dug up, and a more hardy kind put in its place. There are a number of hardy vines now in cultivation which ripen their fruit early, and which will yield a good crop of grapes and ripen them thoroughly in the climate of Stratford. We should expect to succeed with the Concord, Creveling, Eumelan, Telegraph, Champion, Wilder, Massasoit, Martha, Burnet, and Moore's Early.

WINTER APPLES AT BARRIE, FOR MARKET.

A member residing at Barrie asks, "What apple would you recommend to plant in quantities for market as winter apples, in a locality like this, where it appears to be uncertain whether the Baldwin and Rhode Island Greening are sufficiently hardy?"

We are still seeking for the varieties for which enquiry is made by our esteemed correspondent. There are sorts which are sufficiently hardy to endure that climate and to bear good crops of fruit, but—there is a *but* to most if not to all. The Red Astrachan, Tetofsky, Alexander, Duchess of Oldenburg, St. Lawrence, &c., are all sufficiently hardy, but they are not winter fruits. Perhaps the most profitable of all the hardy winter sorts may be the Snow Apple. We say perhaps, because in this climate and soil the fruit is very apt to be spotted with small black spots in such numbers as frequently to destroy the value of the fruit, rendering it entirely unfit for market. If it proves on enquiry about Barrie that the fruit is free from blemish, and that the trees yield as large crops as they do usually wherever planted, there is no doubt about the profitable character of the investment. The demand for well grown Snow Apples, free from blemish, has never been met. But if the fruit is subject there to those black spots that so often ruin it here, do not plant this variety for market, it will not pay.

Next to this we should expect to find the Golden Russet, the one with light colored speckled shoots, sufficiently hardy and productive to be a profitable sort. Here it does well, bears well, yields medium sized, fair, handsome apples, which sell well in the English and Scotch markets. The proprietor of the celebrated Beaver brand of Canadian apples says that it is one of the most profitable varieties in his orchard. Inquiry about Barrie ought to reveal how well it succeeds there, whether there proves to be any thing in the soil or climate of that section which lessens any of the good qualities of this variety as grown elsewhere. The tree is quite hardy and productive about Trenton, Belleville, and that section, and is there planted in considerable quantities for market.

The Ben Davis is a very hardy, vigorous, and productive tree; the fruit is of good size and handsome appearance, and keeps well. It is quite possible that this would prove a profitable variety, but—and

here again comes the *but*—the quality of the fruit is not of the highest order. However, that may not be a serious objection; many of the most popular fruits in our markets are not fruits of the highest excellence of flavor. It has the advantage of beginning to bear early, and blooms late, so as to escape the late spring frosts, and is a popular variety in the Western States.

The Walbridge (Edgar Red Streak) is one of the very hardy kinds that has lately been brought into notice, which is said to be productive and a late keeper.

The Pewaukee is another of these very hardy sorts which keeps through the winter, but we do not yet know enough of them here to give an opinion of their value for profitable market orcharding. In time there will doubtless be found some varieties more hardy than R. I. Greening and Baldwin that can be profitably planted for market purposes in the climate of Barrie, but we must not forget that there are also climatic boundries to successful market orcharding, and the man whose orchard lies within these limits will possess advantages that will enable him to grow more and better fruit than can be grown elsewhere, and hence will find his orchard more profitable.

THE JAPANESE PERSIMMON.

This fruit has been extensively advertized of late, not only under the name given above, but under the more pretentious title, "Fruit of the Gods." It is heralded as the popular fruit of Japan and of China, as coming into bearing very early, and as being very ornamental when loaded with yellow or vermillion fruit as large as apples. The flavor is said to be something so unique and delightful that any attempt at description must fail to give any adequate conceptions of its deliciousness. No one seems as yet to have eaten a specimen in the fresh state; only dried samples that have come to us through the manipulations of oriental conservers of fruits have been tasted, so that no one knows how much of the flavor is to be set down to nature and how much to art.

Nevertheless, it is very possible that horticultural enterprize will be quite equal to the task of bringing this highly praised fruit to the attention of Canadian planters, and that with the high-colored pictures of so showy a fruit, and the high-colored descriptions of its delicious

flavors, some may be tempted to invest a few dollars to secure so valuable a prize. Whether it will prove to be a prize may very much depend upon its ability to endure our climate, and in order that the readers of the CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST may have all the light we can give them on this subject, we submit for their perusal some communications bearing on this point, which appeared in the June number of that excellent publication the *Gardeners' Monthly*, published in Philadelphia.

E. Manning, residing near Harrisburg, Franklin County, Ohio, writes to the Editor as follows: "Last spring I ordered two trees of different varieties, carefully planted them, and they both made a moderate growth. Last fall, before the cold weather set in, I turned a flower barrel over each. Both of the plants were worked on the native stock. I have examined both; the entire top and the whole graft is killed down to the junction of the graft and stock, which was four inches from the ground. Below the graft the native stock was as green as ever."

The Editor of the *Gardeners' Monthly* adds that "four years ago a Philadelphia friend wishing to get ahead with a stock for nursery purposes secured a dozen. They grew admirably during the summer, but were all killed but one the succeeding winter. This was however referred to the extraordinary severity of that season. We believe that the one plant is still living, though it has not been risked to the 'full severity of the winters' since."

Another correspondent's letter appears in the same number of the *Gardeners' Monthly*, in which he states that he purchased a dozen plants, kept one under protection and left the rest exposed to the winter. Those left out all died. The one kept under protection had last fall attained to about an inch in thickness of trunk, and was left out last winter as other trees without protection. This spring it was dead, root and branch. This was in the vicinity of Philadelphia.

These are not favorable indications of sufficient hardiness in the Japan Persimmon to enable it to endure the cold of our Canadian winters. Indeed, if it will not endure the climate of Philadelphia, there is no hope that it will succeed here. The readers of the CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST may therefore save themselves disappointment and some few dollars if they decline for the present to invest in trees of the Japan Persimmon, or Fruit of the Gods.

SOME OF THE NEW STRAWBERRIES.

The writer had occasion to visit the fruit gardens of one of the Directors recently, Mr. A. M. Smith, of Drummondville, and embraced the opportunity thus afforded of examining some varieties of the Strawberry which are of recent introduction and comparing them with our older sorts.

The New Dominion, which originated at this place, in the hands of Mr. Biggar, proves to be an excellent variety for a near market. It does not yield as many berries as the Wilson under the same treatment, but more of the berries attain to a large size, and on this account there will be very nearly or quite as many quarts of berries on an acre. The fruit does not ripen quite as early as the Wilson. The bright color of the berries and their uniform good size make them very attractive.

The Monarch of the West does not seem to be a heavy cropper, and the berries when ripe do not color up well, there being usually a white spot at the point of the berry, giving it the appearance of not being fully ripe. The size is good, and the flavor, but it is not a berry to plant for profit.

The Great American is a very large round berry, showy, and bearing a good crop, though by no means equal to the Wilson as a cropper. It will require to be planted in larger quantity and observed for a year or two before a just estimate can be made of its worth.

The Crescent Seedling does not seem to maintain its western reputation for great yield of fruit, though the yield of runners fully equals all that is claimed for it in this particular. In Ohio it is said to bear enormously with but little culture, not requiring to have the runners kept down, which indeed multiply so fast as to take possession of the ground and choke out the weeds.

In addition to these there was also a considerable plantation of a variety not yet sent out, which originated on Mr. Smith's grounds, and seems to have some points of interest. The vines seemed to be healthy and hardy; the fruit in size, form, color and flavor, to be exactly like the Wilson, so that it seemed to be impossible to distinguish it from that variety, put it ripened a few days earlier. The crop does not all ripen up before the Wilson, but one or two pickings can be taken from this before the first berries of the Wilson

are ripe enough to be gathered. This quality of early ripening is valuable, and it is desirable that this new sort should be thoroughly tested on account of its promise of giving us ripe fruit in paying quantity a few days earlier than we have been wont to get it. We suggest that Smith's Early would be an appropiate name for this new sort.

TREE AGENTS.

Considerable attention has of late been given by the agricultural and rural press to the doings of a class of men usually known as tree agents, men who travel through the country from house to house soliciting orders for trees and plants, both fruit bearing and ornamental. The articles that have appeared—some of them at least—have not been very discriminating. In some, these agents have been represented as great public benefactors, who at no little pain and weariness take the trouble to go about the country introducing fruits and flowers, thus scattering blessings along their path. In others they are denounced as a set of liars and swindlers, deceiving the people and cheating them out of their hard earnings by selling them worthless trash. These laudations and denunciations show that public attention is being roused upon the subject, and it seems well that the CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST should take this opportunity of contributing what it may be able to give towards a fuller understanding of this matter. There is a measure of truth and justice in both the praise and blame that have been bestowed upon tree agents. They have been the means of calling the attention of men to the planting of improved fruits, and to the ornamentation of their grounds with flowering trees and shrubs, and the result has been, beyond question, a more rapid and wide-spread diffusion of a better class of fruits, and of an improved taste for home adornment than would have taken place but for their labors. And on the other hand there have been, and doubtless may be now found among their number, men who richly deserve all the denunciations that can be heaped upon them—men who do not scruple to give new names to old things in order to get a larger price for them,—who do not hesitate to make false representations whereby they may dispose of articles absolutely worthless to the purchaser.

The history of the tree agency business seems to be on this wise. Nurserymen found that in order to sell their productions they must bring them to the personal notice of those who would naturally become purchasers. It was not sufficient to advertise in the newspapers that they had fruit and ornamental trees for sale. Many men had but very imperfect knowledge of the value of good fruit; it was necessary that they should be persuaded that it was to their interest to purchase these trees, and in no way could that be done so well as by a personal interview. Hence nurserymen adopted the expedient of hiring men to go out and canvass the country, to tell expected customers about the fruit trees they had for sale, and pursuade them to purchase and plant them. In this way they succeeded in disposing of their stock of trees, enlarging their business, and gradually creating an increased taste for good fruit, and for ornamental trees and plants, but with this result, we believe, that the great bulk of their sales were effected through the travelling agents.

As the nurseryman's business increased and more extensive plantations were made, he found that his time and attention were necessarily absorbed by his cultivations, and he was prepared for the next step in the history of this business. As the agents acquired skill and experience in selling, they naturally began to consider whether they could not turn that skill to some good account for their own benefit. The idea of taking the selling into their own hands, and paying the nurserymen for whom they sold a wholesale price, was a very obvious one, and while the skilful salesman increased his gains, the nurseryman was relieved of the detail of the agency business; and arrangements were made whereby the agent continued to represent the nursery from which the trees came, but paid himself by the profit he might make above the stipulated wholesale price.

The further history of the tree agency business is but the natural outcome of the change we have just indicated. Agents acquired a certain reputation for furnishing satisfactory trees; the purchasers had dealt only with the agents, and though the credit for the quality of the trees was strictly due to the nurserymen, yet the relation between the grower and buyer was of that distant nature that it failed to bind them together, and the agents very readily began to inquire if they could not find some place where they could buy cheaper. Relying upon the reputation gained for them by the trees they had delivered,

they solicit orders in their own name, and go into the market to buy where they can buy cheapest. By this means a class of middle-men has sprung up in the tree business, who supply purchasers with trees, the purchaser not knowing from what nursery his trees come, and the nurseryman equally ignorant of the person who plants what he has grown. This system of selling by men who do not grow the trees has now assumed a peculiar feature, and extensive co-partnerships have been formed by them, under the style of which they advertize themselves as nurserymen, issue catalogues like those of nurserymen, hire canvassers to go out and sell for them as though they were the growers, and by doing a large business, are able to buy a part of their stock in one nursery and a part in another, as they find most to their advantage.

This then is the present position of the tree agency business, and now we have representatives of all these different classes of tree agents at work among us; the agent who is sent out by the nurseryman, the agent who represents the nursery from which he buys at wholesale, the agent who does not in fact represent any particular nursery, but sells on his own account, and the agent who is selling for a firm of tree brokers styling themselves nurserymen.

Unfortunately there is no system of selling trees that can not be used by unscrupulous men to their own immediate gain, and the defrauding of those who purchase of them. The method of buying that is least likely to result in disappointment through dishonesty of the seller, is where the buyer purchases directly of the producer. It is usually found to be the fact that the desire to maintain a good reputation in his business transactions, for the sake of his business, if no better motive, will induce the nurseryman to deal honorably with the purchaser. Next to dealing directly with the nurseryman comes the purchasing through his accredited salesmen. The difficulty here lies chiefly in knowing certainly that he is truly an agent of the nursery. Most nurserymen supply their agents with a certificate to shew that they are sent out by them, but even these have been forged. In purchasing from those who are not representing any particular nursery, but are dealers or brokers in trees, of course confidence is reposed only in the agent himself, and the purchaser relies solely upon him to bring such trees in kind and quality as he orders.

That those who buy through tree agents are liable to be imposed upon by dishonest men has been true in the past, and will be true as

long as such men exist. They are to be found in every calling, but there is probably no business which offers greater temptations to an unscrupulous man than tree selling. Such a man soon learns that his purchasers are very poorly informed on the subject of trees, and know little or nothing of the character and qualities of either the tree or the fruit, and from this fact are ready to accept any representation he may make concerning either. The ignorance and credulity sometimes manifested are really something marvellous, equalled only by the unblushing impudence of the men who practice upon them. What man who had any information concerning the effect of frost upon peach trees would have been deceived by the representation that by grafting the peach upon a certain kind of stock it was made hardy, so that it would thrive and bear large crops of fruit in such places as the coldest parts of the Counties of Huron, Grey and Bruce? And yet it is true that large sales were made of peach trees said to be worked upon this wonderful stock at very high prices, ranging from fifty cents to a dollar per tree. It is such ignorance as this that enables men of no principle to sell at high prices such worthless things as were palmed off under the name of Utah Hybrid Cherry, and to sell old varieties of hardy trees at high prices as though they were new introductions. This want of information in regard to some of the most simple matters connected with the planting of trees affords opportunity for deception and fraud that ought not to exist, and though it is no excuse for dishonesty in the seller, is in this day of opportunity for information quite unpardonable in the purchaser. The Fruit Growers' Association has been supplying its members at the nominal cost of one dollar per year, by means of its Annual Reports and through the pages of the CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST, with such information as will enable them to be on their guard against imposition, but unfortunately a very small proportion of those who purchase trees are members, or ever see what has been published. Many decline to become members to save the dollar, and before the year is out are defrauded of several dollars by buying at a high price some old variety of tree or plant under a new name, that they would not have bought if they had read the publications of this Association. Dishonest men find both profit and pleasure in practicing upon ignorance, and grow bold in their dishonesty as they learn how easily men are duped.

But notwithstanding all the deceptions and frauds that are practised

in this way, it is not true that there are no honest tree agents. There are men who sell trees who would scorn to make any representation which they did not believe to be true. From such men it is safe to buy. There is need of caution always in buying from strangers, but when a tree agent has established a reputation for fair dealing he deserves the confidence reposed in him. A rogue can not continue to sell in the same section of country for any length of time, but an honest salesman can continue to travel over the same ground for many years, the lapse of time only making him better known and increasing the confidence of his customers in his honesty. It is not to be expected that the business of tree selling will be carried on without tree agents. They are an established institution among us, and hold a position in this business analagous to that of the commercial traveller. Prudent caution on the part of purchasers with regard to the persons from whom they buy, and the acquisition of some information from reliable and disinterested sources on the subject of trees and fruits, and especially by keeping themselves informed on the introduction of new fruits, and the changes time and more extended experience are making in the estimation in which the different sorts are held, will enable those who buy to escape the mortification and disappointment which so many have experienced, and save them from the loss of time and money.

USE OF THE FEET IN SOWING AND PLANTING.

At the last meeting of the American Association of Nurserymen a paper was read on this subject by Peter Henderson, of New York, which is of so much practical value that we recommend it most heartily to the attention of our readers. He says, "I candidly admit that although I have been extensively engaged in gardering operations for over a quarter of a century, I did not fully realize until a few years ago how indespensable it was to use the feet in the operation of sowing and planting. Particularly in the sowing of seeds, I consider the matter of such vast importance that it can not be too often or too strongly told. We sow annually about four acres of celery, cabbage and cauliflower, which produces probably five millions of plants, and which we never fail to sell mostly in our own immediate neighborhood to the market gardeners, who have many of them better facilities for

raising them than we have, if they would only do as we do, firm the seed after sowing.

"It is done thus: After plowing, harrowing and leveling the land smoothly, lines are drawn by the marker, which makes furrows about two inches deep and a foot apart. After the man who sows the seed there follows another who with the ball of the right foot presses down his full weight on every inch of soil in the drill where the seed has been sown, the rows are then lightly leveled longitudinally with the rake, then a light roller is passed over it, and the operation is done. By this method our crop has never once failed, and what is true of celery and cabbage seed is nearly true of all other seeds requiring to be sown during the late spring or summer months.

"On July 22nd, 1874, as an experiment I sowed twelve rows of sweet corn and twelve rows of beets, treading in after sowing every alternate row of each. In both cases those trod in came up in four days, while those unfirmed remained twelve days before starting, and would not then have germinated had rain not fallen, for the soil was dry as dust when planted. The result was that the seeds that had been trodden in grew freely from the start, and matured their crops to a marketable condition by fall, while the rows unfirmed did not mature, as they were not only eight days later in germinating, but the plants were also to come extent enfeebled by being partially dried in the loose dry soil.

"This experiment was a most useful one, for it proved that a corn crop grown in the vicinity of New York as late as July 22nd could be made to produce roasting ears in October, when they never fail to sell at high rates; but the crop would not mature unless the seed germinated at once, and which would never be certain at that dry and hot season unless by this method. The same season in August I treated seeds of turnip and spinach in the same way, those trod in germinated at once and made an excellent crop, while the unfirmed germinated feebly, and were eventually nearly all burned out by a continuance of dry hot air penetrating through the loose soil to the tender rootlets.

"Of course this rule of treading in or firming seeds after sowing must not be blindly followed. Very early in spring or late in the fall when the soil is damp, and no danger from heated dry air, there is no necessity to do so, or even at other seasons the soil may be in a suitable condition to sow, and yet be too damp to be trodden upon or rolled.

In such cases these operations may not be necessary at all, for if rainy weather ensue the seeds will germinate of course, but if there be any likelihood of continued drouth the treading or rolling may be done a week or so after sowing, if at such a season as there is no reason to believe that it may suffer from the dry hot air."

Now if firming the soil around seed to protect it from the influence of a dry and hot atmosphere is a necessity, it is obvious that it is even more so in the case of plants whose rootlets are even more sensitive to such influence than dormant seed. Experienced horticulturists are less likely to neglect this than in the case of seeds, for the damage from such neglect is easier to be seen, and hence better understood by practical nurserymen, but with the inexperienced amateur the case is different. When he receives his package of trees he handles them as if they were glass, every broken twig or root calls forth a complaint, and he proceeds to plant gingerly, straightening out each root and sifting the soil around them, but he would no more stamp down that soil than he would stamp on the soil of his mother's grave. So the plant in nine cases out of ten is left loose and wagging; the dry air penetrates through the soil to its roots, the winds shake it, it shrivels up and fails to grow; then comes the anathemas on the head of the unfortunate nurseryman, who is charged with selling him dead trees or plants.

About a month ago I sent a package of a dozen roses to a lady in Savannah. She wrote me a woeful story last week, saying that though the roses had arrived seemingly all right, they had all died but one, and what was very singular, she said, the one that lived was the one that Mr. Jones had stepped on, and which she had thought had surely been crushed to death, for Mr. Jones weighed two hundred pounds. Now we do not advise any gentleman of two hundred pounds putting his brogans on the top of a tender rose plant as a practice conducive to its health, yet if Mrs. Jones could have allowed her weighty lord to have pressed the soil against the roots of each of her dozen roses, I much doubt if she would now have had to mourn their loss.

THE FIG.

BY P. E. BUCKE, OTTAWA.

I am glad to see in the HORTICULTURIST that attention is being drawn to the cultivation of the fig. The summer heat of this Province

is admirably adapted to the ripening of this fruit, and if only the frost of winter can be overcome by soil protection there is no reason why its cultivation should not be a success. Unfortunately the fig is a shrub with a very brittle stem, and if it can be laid down as Mr. Needham states, it will require to be very carefully done, as it is not nearly so pliable as the grape vine, or even as the raspberry. This method of protection I attempted with the peach but signally failed. The trees came out fine and green in the spring, but the air soon dried them and they never leafed out; however, this does not prove that the fig will not stand after being uncovered quite as well as the grape. I understand the fig may be grown in the open air, dug up in the autumn and heeled-in in a cellar,—similar to the mode some of the Michigan nurserymen have of keeping young stock through the winter,—and planted in the spring without the least harm either to the tree, or in any way retarding its bearing fruit. I can bear good testimony to the plant growing readily from cuttings, as I obtained some of these from a friend about eight inches long, and set them 10th June last; the fig from which the cuttings were taken was in full leaf; the leaves dropped from the cuttings, but some are now, 10th July, in good leaf, and none failed to grow. I feel certain that should I not succeed in growing figs here, as I intend trying, they could be grown near the Rondeau, on Lake Erie, or the islands off Point Pelee. During my stay in the south of England, in Devon and Dorset, I have often seen the fig cultivated both as a hedge or screen, and also trained on the garden walls.

In England it bears two crops a year and is most prolific. Not being aware at that time that there was more than one variety, I made no enquiry as to the kinds grown. In Weighmouth, Dorset, they are regularly sold on the streets fresh picked from the tree, but I think in this way the taste, like that for the Tomato, must be an acquired one, as they have a sickish flavor to my palate, however they make a charming preserve, and are exceedingly wholesome either dried or when gathered ripe. I trust that Mr. Needham's remarks may draw attention to this very prolific and interesting fruit, and that our western friends will turn their attention to the new industry; and if after a trial it is found that the plant can be laid down and covered like the grapevine, I make no doubt it will prove a great boon to all classes of the community.

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THE BOTANICAL SOCIETY.

In the May number there appeared an article on the study of botany, from the pen of George Mill, of Warwick, Ont., in which it was proposed to form a botanical society; and to that end, all persons wishing to form such a society were requested to send their names and address to the CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST for publication. The object of this is to enable students of botany to become acquainted with each other, and to take such steps as may seem advisable for the formation of a permanent provincial society.

The following names have been received:

J. FLETCHER, OTTAWA.
G. A. DEADMAN, BRUSSELS.
MRS. WM. ROY, OWEN SOUND.
JAMES H. BOWMAN, LONDON.
A. J. WILKINSON, CAMERAY, VICTORIA CO.
REV. R. HAY, FOREST.
L. McFADYEN, FOREST.
DR. SCOTT, FOREST.
MISS WOODROOFE, FOREST.
MRS. HART, FOREST.
JAMES JOHNSTONE, FOREST.
GEORGE MILL, WARWICK.